

# RACE TO THE TOP

## Ohio Report

Year 2: School Year 2011–2012

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U.S. Department of Education  
Washington, DC 20202

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February 1, 2013

# Executive Summary

## Race to the Top overview

On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), historic legislation designed to stimulate the economy, support job creation, and invest in critical sectors, including education. ARRA provided \$4.35 billion for the Race to the Top fund, of which approximately \$4 billion was used to fund comprehensive statewide reform grants under the Race to the Top program.<sup>1</sup> In 2010, the U.S. Department of Education (Department) awarded Race to the Top Phase 1 and Phase 2 grants to 11 States and the District of Columbia. The Race to the Top program is a competitive four-year grant program designed to encourage and reward States that are creating the conditions for education innovation and reform; achieving significant improvement in student outcomes, including making substantial gains in student achievement, closing achievement gaps, and improving high school graduation rates; and ensuring students are prepared for success in college and careers.

Since the Race to the Top Phase 1 and 2 competitions, the Department has made additional grants under Race to the Top Phase 3, Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge, and Race to the Top – District. In 2011, the Department awarded Phase 3 grants to seven additional States, which were finalists in the 2010 Race to the Top Phase 1 and Phase 2 competitions. Also in 2011, the Department made seven awards under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge to improve quality and expand access to early learning programs, and close the achievement gap for children with high needs. In 2012, four more States received Early Learning Challenge grants. Most recently, in 2012, the Department made awards to 16 applicants through the Race to the Top – District competition to support local educational agencies (LEAs) implementing locally developed plans to personalize and deepen student learning, directly improve student achievement and educator effectiveness, close achievement gaps, and prepare every student to succeed in college and career.

The Race to the Top program is built on the framework of comprehensive reform in four education reform areas:

- Adopting rigorous standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and the workplace;
- Building data systems that measure student success and inform teachers and principals how they can improve their practices;
- Recruiting, developing, retaining, and rewarding effective teachers and principals; and
- Turning around the lowest-performing schools.

Since education is a complex system, sustained and lasting instructional improvement in classrooms, schools, LEAs, and States will not be achieved through piecemeal change. Race to the Top requires that States and LEAs participating in the State's Race to the Top plan (participating LEAs)<sup>2</sup> take into account their local context to design and implement the most effective and innovative approaches that meet the needs of their educators, students, and families.

## Race to the Top program review

As part of the Department's commitment to supporting States as they implement ambitious reform agendas, the Department established the Implementation and Support Unit (ISU) in the Office of the Deputy Secretary to administer, among others, the Race to the Top program. The goal of the ISU is to provide assistance to States as they implement unprecedented and comprehensive reforms to improve student outcomes. Consistent with this goal, the Department has developed a Race to the Top program review process that not only addresses the Department's responsibilities for fiscal and programmatic oversight, but is also designed to identify areas in which Race to the Top grantees need assistance and support to meet their goals. Specifically, the ISU works with Race to the Top grantees to differentiate support based on individual State needs, and helps States work with each other and with experts to achieve and sustain educational reforms that improve student outcomes. In partnership with the ISU, the Reform Support Network (RSN) offers collective and individualized technical assistance and resources to Race to the Top grantees. The RSN's purpose is to support Race to the Top grantees as they implement reforms in education policy and practice, learn from each other, and build their capacity to sustain these reforms.

Grantees are accountable for the implementation of their approved Race to the Top plans, and the information and data gathered throughout the program review help to inform the Department's management and support of the Race to the Top grantees, as well as provide appropriate and timely updates to the public on their progress. In the event that adjustments are required to an approved plan, the grantee must submit a formal amendment request to the Department for consideration. States may submit for Department approval amendment requests to a plan and budget, provided such changes do not significantly affect the scope or objectives of the approved plans. In the event that the Department determines that a grantee is not meeting its goals, activities, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is not fulfilling other applicable requirements, the Department will take appropriate enforcement action(s), consistent with 34 CFR section 80.43 in the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The remaining funds were awarded under the Race to the Top Assessment program. More information about the Race to the Top Assessment program is available at [www.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-assessment](http://www.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-assessment).

<sup>2</sup> Participating LEAs are those LEAs that choose to work with the State to implement all or significant portions of the State's Race to the Top plan, as specified in each LEA's Memorandum of Understanding with the State. Each participating LEA that receives funding under Title I, Part A will receive a share of the 50 percent of a State's grant award that the State must subgrant to LEAs, based on the LEA's relative share of Title I, Part A allocations in the most recent year, in accordance with section 14006(c) of the ARRA.

<sup>3</sup> More information about the ISU's program review process, State APR data, and State Scopes of Work can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/index.html>.

# Executive Summary

## State-specific summary report

The Department uses the information gathered during the review process (e.g., through monthly calls, onsite reviews, and Annual Performance Reports (APRs)) to draft State-specific summary reports.<sup>4</sup> The State-specific summary report serves as an assessment of a State's annual Race to the Top implementation. The Year 2 report for Phase 1 and 2 grantees highlights successes and accomplishments, identifies challenges, and provides lessons learned from implementation from approximately September 2011 through September 2012.

## State's education reform agenda

Ohio is a large state, diverse in both its geography and population. The State has 955 LEAs with more than 3,500 schools, including 325 independent charter schools, which the State refers to as "community schools." A workforce of approximately 110,000 teachers and leaders educate 1.8 million students, of whom 45 percent live in poverty.<sup>5</sup>

The State is committed to improving student achievement, and, in its Race to the Top application, the State describes student achievement as the State's "most pressing social and economic imperative." Ohio's overarching goals for its Race to the Top grant, which support its education reform agenda, are to:

- Increase high school graduation rates by 0.5 percent per year to approximately 88 percent by the end of the grant period;
- Reduce the graduation rate gap by 50 percent between underrepresented and majority students in participating LEAs and community schools;
- Reduce academic performance gaps by 50 percent on national and statewide assessments for the same students;
- Reduce the gap between Ohio and the nation's best-performing states by 50 percent on national reading and mathematics assessments; and,
- More than double the increase in college enrollment of students under the age of 19 to 14.5 percent by fall 2013, and more than double the increase in college persistence of enrolled students to 10.35 percent within the same time period.

Ohio's \$400 million Race to the Top grant, of which 52 percent will flow to LEAs participating in Race to the Top, supports new initiatives to advance education reform and accelerate and expand the State's reform efforts that are already underway.

## State Year 1 summary

During Year 1 of its Race to the Top implementation, Ohio developed tools to help LEAs identify gaps and areas of need in implementing their Race to the Top plans. The State also assigned coordinators and specialists to act as a primary resource and to give targeted support to LEAs in each of the State's six Race to the Top regions.<sup>6</sup> Also during Year 1, Ohio adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics and revised its standards for science and social studies. Further, the State awarded 46 LEAs competitive grants to create and implement innovative models for school reform.

In addition, the State developed a State model for principal and teacher evaluation systems to inform professional development and human resources decisions including retention, dismissal, tenure, and compensation. Ohio provided biweekly professional development opportunities and information on best practices for improving student achievement for staff in its 36 persistently lowest-achieving (PLA) schools. The State also awarded a contract for the Ohio Network for Education Transformation (ONET) to support school reform, provide technical assistance, and develop innovative school models.

While Ohio experienced many successes during Year 1, the State also faced some challenges. Transitions in leadership and key staff resulted in timeline delays for several initiatives, including the selection of an assessment consortium, rollout of the kindergarten readiness assessment pilot, and establishment of a performance funding element for educator preparation programs. Budget deficits required the State to reduce Ohio Department of Education (ODE) staff, as well as the number of Woodrow Wilson science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) Fellows.<sup>7</sup> Finally, a lack of participating LEA engagement, particularly for those with low Race to the Top funding allocations, resulted in a decrease of participating LEAs from 538 at the start of the grant period to 478 by October 2011.

## State Year 2 summary

### Accomplishments

During Year 2, Ohio built on its Year 1 successes. In its transition to the CCSS, the State created a high school and IHE committee to align college and career standards with colleges' and universities' entrance requirements. To improve educator data access and allow

<sup>4</sup> Additional State-specific data on progress against annual performance measures and goals reported in the Year 2 APRs can be found on the Race to the Top Data Display at [www.rtt-apr.us](http://www.rtt-apr.us).

<sup>5</sup> This section reflects counts of schools and students reported in the State's Phase 2 application (Fall 2010).

<sup>6</sup> The State established six Race to the Top regions to support participating LEAs. Five geographical regions (central, northwest, northeast, southwest, southeast) and one urban region that supports Ohio's eight large urban participating LEAs.

<sup>7</sup> The Woodrow Wilson STEM Fellowship Program requires 15 months of coursework at a participating institution of higher education (IHE) followed by one to three years of classroom mentoring.

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the State to track students once they exit the kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) system, the State worked with an external vendor to assign statewide student identifiers (SSIDs) to all high school seniors and freshmen attending State public IHEs. The State piloted the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) in 136 LEAs in school year (SY) 2011-2012, and worked with a vendor to develop and deploy required training and online credentialing for evaluators of teachers and principals. Ohio also developed and solicited feedback on an analysis tool to help measure the distribution of effective teachers across LEAs, and provided LEAs with several survey tools to gather educator feedback. In addition, the Ohio Board of Regents (OBR) drafted educator preparation quality metrics and revised its education preparation program report cards to measure the effectiveness of State IHEs.

The State also created structures to ensure that participating LEAs receive frequent Race to the Top updates. For example, after Ohio became a governing State in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) consortium, it partnered with PARCC to present a webinar to LEAs about the consortium and its approach to assessments. Ohio also provided professional development sessions and technical assistance to LEAs to familiarize them with key Race to the Top projects, including the CCSS, the educator evaluation system, new educator preparation initiatives, and the school intervention efforts for Ohio's PLA schools.<sup>8</sup> To support the transition to the CCSS, the State regularly updated its website with model curricula for LEAs. Ohio held multiple technical assistance sessions for its PLAs, assessing professional development needs to inform subsequent ODE support. In addition, Ohio's STEM initiatives included the establishment of seven regional STEM hubs that provided specialized services to participating LEAs and addressed regional needs.

Throughout the year, Ohio focused on implementing its Race to the Top plan with quality and fidelity. For example, in spring 2012 ODE held a stocktake meeting to analyze implementation challenges and make project adjustments where necessary. The State also surveyed participating LEAs about the State's communication efforts and used the data to reevaluate and improve outreach to LEAs.

## Challenges

During Year 2 Ohio faced some difficulty aligning ODE and OBR efforts, as well as developing comprehensive contractor oversight processes. In addition, the State grappled with how to provide support to non-traditional PLA schools, namely community and virtual schools. Ohio continues to focus on ways to ensure sustainability of its Race to the Top reforms and high levels of LEA engagement.

Data integration remains a challenge, as the State's development of its Instructional Improvement System (IIS) has been delayed due to ongoing discussions regarding the best approach to this work. The State also recognized a need to identify measures for gauging the effectiveness of its alternate routes to teacher certification and STEM initiatives in order to ensure high-quality implementation. Moreover, the State is working to clarify expectations related to the use of student growth measures in an effort to mitigate the potential for variation of implementation of educator evaluation systems among LEAs, and has developed and made available guidance to help LEAs determine, implement, and collect measures of student growth.

## Looking ahead to Year 3

During Year 3, Ohio plans to assess and revise its structures to ensure quality implementation of all of its projects. As part of this work, Ohio developed an expanded statewide engagement strategy for educators and other stakeholders such as the general public and policymakers. In addition, Ohio plans to reevaluate its curriculum and assessment resources, as well as how LEA professional development plans are submitted, reviewed, and approved. Finally, in Year 3, participating LEAs will pilot or implement the OTES and the Ohio Principal Evaluation System (OPES) to support full implementation of both systems no later than SY 2013-2014.

<sup>8</sup>Race to the Top States' plans include supporting their LEAs in turning around the lowest-achieving schools by implementing one of the four school intervention models:

- **Turnaround model:** Replace the principal and rehire no more than 50 percent of the staff and grant the principal sufficient operational flexibility (including in staffing, calendars/time and budgeting) to fully implement a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student outcomes.
- **Restart model:** Convert a school or close and reopen it under a charter school operator, a charter management organization, or an education management organization that has been selected through a rigorous review process.

- **School closure:** Close a school and enroll the students who attended that school in other schools in the district that are higher achieving.
- **Transformation model:** Implement each of the following strategies: (1) replace the principal and take steps to increase teacher and school leader effectiveness, (2) institute comprehensive instructional reforms, (3) increase learning time and create community-oriented schools, and (4) provide operational flexibility and sustained support.



# State Success Factors

## Building capacity to support LEAs

In Year 2, the ODE Delivery Unit<sup>9</sup> maintained frequent contact with participating LEAs and partner organizations such as the Ohio Business Coalition, the State Reform Steering Committee, and the Education Research Center. Throughout the year, Ohio held quarterly meetings with education reform area leads, as well as ongoing meetings across ODE, to clarify the role of regional staff and maximize limited resources. Also, the State identified redundancies in the work conducted by ODE's multiple divisions and centers to align, focus, and streamline work. ODE further enhanced the effectiveness of its tiered regional support structure by clarifying the role, function, and responsibilities of each regional support specialist and aligning the development of supports and resources provided to the field. Finally, the State instituted quarterly stocktake meetings within ODE to assess progress and identify areas in need of continuous improvement.

Despite a delay of several months in releasing a request for proposals (RFP), in March 2012, Ohio awarded the Ohio Education Research Collaborative (OERC) contract to Ohio State University. Under the contract, Ohio State University researchers will collect and disseminate Race to the Top implementation research findings at the annual OERC statewide research conference. The State held its first annual OERC statewide research conference in fall 2012 to provide information on OERC's Scope of Work. The contractor has developed a research plan, and will work to ensure timely and high-quality progress on data collection in order to provide helpful information to the field.

## Support and accountability for LEAs

### LEA supports

During Year 2, the State regularly communicated with participating LEAs through its 16 regional coordinators and specialists, the ODE Race to the Top website, a weekly newsletter, and ongoing surveys. For example, the State developed and administered a Year 1 communication progress survey and used the results to reevaluate its communication efforts and improve LEA outreach. The State also conducted its first annual statewide conference in November 2011 to highlight successes and LEA best practices. In May 2012, the State hosted regional meetings—two one-day sessions in each of the six regions—to provide a forum for LEAs to share promising practices,

voice concerns and request assistance from ODE. The State subsequently convened a statewide symposium for all participating LEAs, building on the lessons learned during the regional meetings.

In fall 2012, the State's coordinators and specialists collaborated to create a feedback and support model for participating LEAs that will incorporate rubrics to help the State identify successful LEA-level implementation and prioritize supports. The State's regional coordinators and specialists held ongoing face-to-face meetings to share successes in their regions, troubleshoot challenges, and normalize the quality of local implementation across LEAs. During these meetings, regional coordinators and specialists identified specific LEA needs and differentiated supports accordingly. Moreover, Ohio participated in a regional delivery workgroup led by the RSN to evaluate and inform continuous improvement of its LEA support structure. The State plans to continue its ongoing communication efforts and frequent feedback loops with the LEAs to inform State implementation and identify gaps in support.

Ohio recognized the importance of its outreach efforts for sustainability of LEA engagement, particularly as the total number of participating LEAs decreased from 478 at the start of Year 2 to 464 as of June 2012. The State identified several reasons for LEA withdrawals, including low levels of funding and disagreements between LEA administration boards and teacher association leadership.<sup>10</sup> To address this challenge the State is working closely with LEAs to reaffirm their commitment to Race to the Top and troubleshoot as issues arise.

### Monitoring

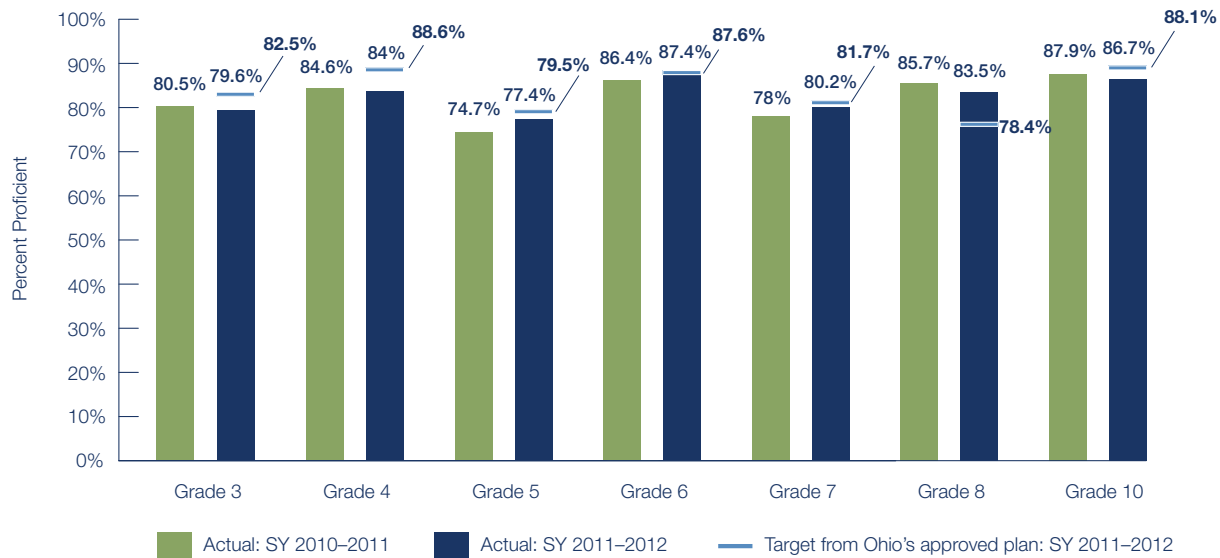
The State continued to implement several systems for monitoring participating districts, including comprehensive annual reviews of LEA-updated Year 2 Scopes of Work and budgets, a monthly monitoring protocol for participating LEAs to complete and submit to ODE, an enhanced funding reimbursement request process, and ongoing processes to ensure quality implementation of participating LEAs' plans. In addition, the State created a SharePoint site to share resources and allow LEAs to submit the monthly protocols and budget requests. The State also maintained its formal amendment request, approval, and reimbursement request processes, each aligned to LEAs' approved budget cost categories. Finally, to ensure that contractor deliverables are high quality and submitted on time, the State reexamined its contractor monitoring process and amended its subrecipient monitoring plan to include procedures for holding its contractors accountable for success.

<sup>9</sup>The ODE Delivery Unit is comprised of six staff members overseeing ODE's work; 24 ODE personnel that manage and coordinate the 15 Race to the Top projects; one regional coordinator for each of the six Race to the Top regions to provide guidance, technical assistance, and communication to LEAs on program implementation; and 16 regional specialists who work as liaisons to LEAs.

<sup>10</sup>Ohio requires union support for Race to the Top participation, thus disagreements between LEAs and teacher association leadership can lead to participating LEA withdrawal.

# State Success Factors

## Student Proficiency on Ohio's ELA Assessment

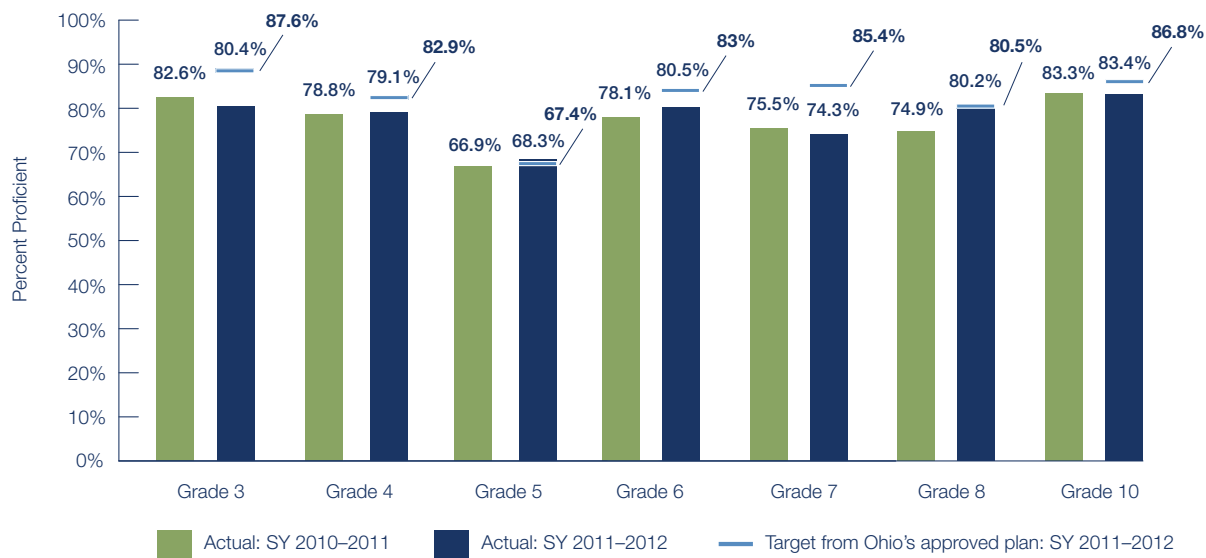


Preliminary SY 2011-2012 data reported as of: September 25, 2012

NOTE: Over the last two years, a number of States adopted new assessments and/or cut scores.

For State-reported context, please refer to the Race to the Top APR at [www.rtt-apr.us](http://www.rtt-apr.us).

## Student Proficiency on Ohio's Mathematics Assessment



Preliminary SY 2011-2012 data reported as of: September 25, 2012

NOTE: Over the last two years, a number of States adopted new assessments and/or cut scores.

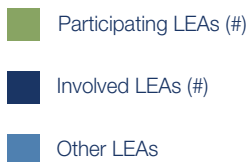
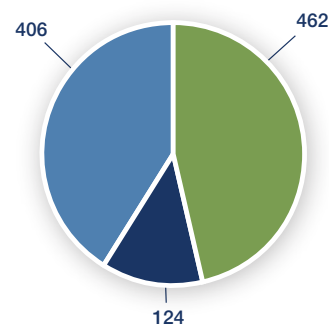
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# State Success Factors

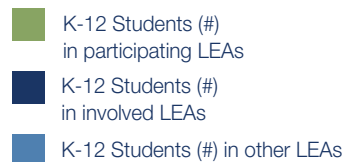
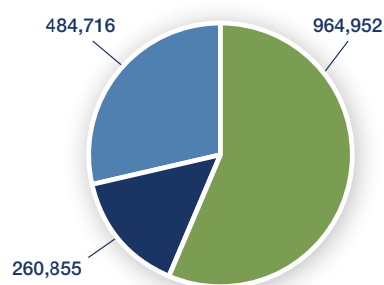
## LEA participation

Ohio reported 464 participating LEAs as of June 30, 2012. This represents over 57 percent of the State's K-12 students and over 66 percent of its students in poverty.

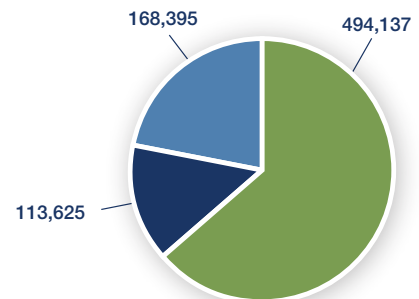
LEAs Participating in Ohio's Race to the Top Plan



K-12 Students in LEAs Participating in Ohio's Race to the Top Plan



Students in Poverty in LEAs Participating in Ohio's Race to the Top Plan



For State-reported context, please refer to the Race to the Top APR at [www.rtt-apr.us](http://www.rtt-apr.us).

## Stakeholder engagement

Throughout Year 2, Ohio engaged various stakeholder groups to communicate, design, implement and provide feedback on various components of its Race to the Top plan. The State frequently communicated with participating LEAs via its regional coordinators and specialists, ODE's Race to the Top website, weekly newsletters, and ongoing surveys. The State also held ongoing meetings with its partners, including the Ohio Business Coalition, the State Reform Steering Team, and other stakeholders to inform stakeholder groups of progress and to solicit feedback on Race to the Top implementation. Similarly, Ohio met quarterly with local Education Service Centers (ESCs) and superintendents.

To prepare for CCSS implementation, the State relied on advisory groups of educators, instructional coaches, and members of IHEs to help document how previous Ohio education standards compare with the newly revised and adopted CCSS. The State also awarded competitive grants to ten regional LEA and IHE partnerships to continue the work of aligning college readiness expectations and high school curricula (see *Standards and Assessments*). Finally, the State's core advisory committee, comprised of staff from ODE, OBR,

LEAs, and IHEs, created an alignment plan that was posted online to gather stakeholder feedback. The State also continued to involve State teacher associations (the Ohio Education Association and the Ohio Federation of Teachers) in its work, particularly in supporting the roll-out of the teacher evaluation training. In addition, the associations worked collaboratively with ODE in addressing local concerns or issues among local association chapters.

A diverse group of stakeholders from the State—including the State Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent, representatives from both teacher associations, several LEA superintendents, and a State Board of Education member—attended a convening organized by the Reform Support Network in January 2012 to identify and work through a specific problem of practice related to the intersection of educator evaluation systems and the CCSS rollout. Ohio discussed the need to reach out to two other audiences beyond the educator community to ensure future implementation success: the public at large and policy makers. As a result, Ohio requested RSN and cross-State support in constructing and presenting a unified public message related to the education initiatives highlighted by Race to the Top. The State realized that branding certain work as Race to the

# State Success Factors

Top was problematic as legislation requires the work to be done by all LEAs statewide, not just those participating in the State's Race to the Top plan. As a result, the State is making a conscious effort to stop branding these initiatives as Race to the Top initiatives and is considering additional structures to communicate with and support all LEAs statewide.

During Year 2, Ohio developed a more collaborative relationship within the State's offices, and streamlined joint ODE and OBR processes. Moreover, Ohio moved toward aligning Race to the Top and other initiatives, such as the Ohio Improvement Process plan and the Department's Teacher Incentive Fund program.

## Continuous improvement

To inform future implementation and program enhancements, Ohio frequently assessed its activities via surveys and research studies conducted by external vendors. The State, with support from the Great Lakes East Comprehensive Center, administered a communications progress survey to assess how well ODE communicated and distributed information during Year 1. The State also contracted with Ohio University to analyze its value-added report efforts completed in Year 1. To help refine the OTES and OPES models, it obtained feedback from LEAs on strengths and areas in need of improvement. The State also tracked and assessed its implementation activities related to the PARCC assessments rollout and plans to evaluate related curriculum and assessment resources at least once annually to update and revise those resources.

Moreover, throughout the year, Ohio set up multiple support structures and opportunities to help LEAs build the capacity to successfully implement and enhance the State's Race to the Top plans. For example, the State developed a gap analysis tool to assist LEAs in determining whether their local IIS is in alignment with the State IIS. The State also made available to LEAs an electronic Teacher and Principal Evaluation System (eTPES) tool to gather evaluation data, and provided webinars, training videos, and resources to assist LEAs as they begin to use the tool (see *Great Teachers and Leaders*). Additionally, the State tailored support systems to meet the needs of its PLAs and worked closely with them to implement school intervention efforts.

## Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

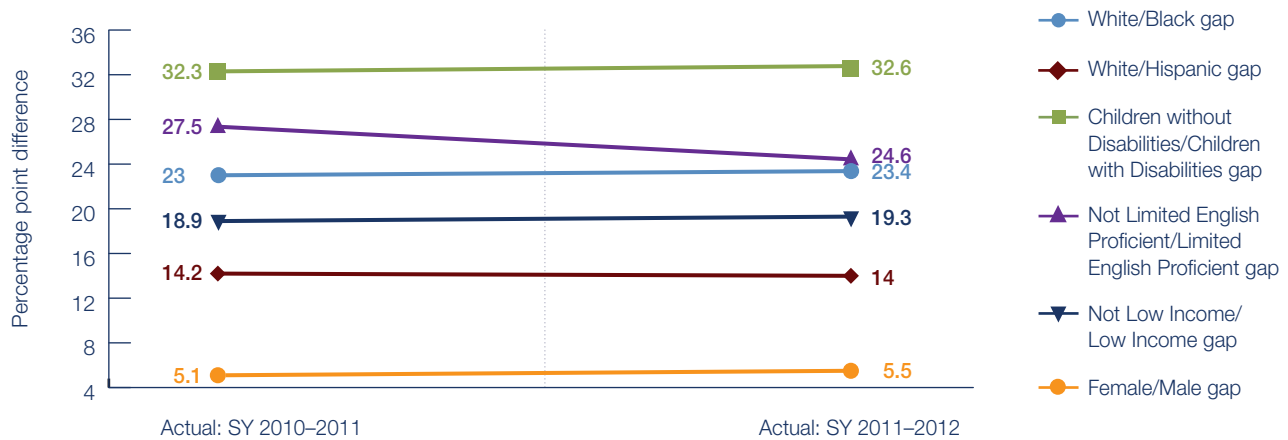
The State continued to reevaluate and revise its structures and approach to implementation to ensure it can improve and adapt to the needs of its LEAs, as well as identify and address potential barriers to success in a timely manner. ODE's ongoing monitoring of its participating LEAs ensured consistent oversight and awareness of what was happening in the field, and allowed ODE to collect continuous feedback and requests for assistance. Ohio's continued implementation of its tiered support structure provided support to its numerous participating LEAs, and based on anecdotal praise by LEAs, believe this support was timely, comprehensive, and accessible. The State's research to identify the most comprehensive and impactful communication strategies may allow the State be more effective with communication in future years, particularly with ensuring that LEAs understand and are able to build internal capacity for the work.

There are, however, several implementation challenges the State is working to address. While the State improved coordination between ODE and OBR efforts, it must continue to work in Year 3 on aligning and clarifying distinctions between Race to the Top and other related initiatives. In addition, the State must work to ensure timely and high-quality progress on the delayed OERC research contract to collect and share Race to the Top implementation research findings.



# State Success Factors

## Achievement Gap on Ohios ELA Assessment



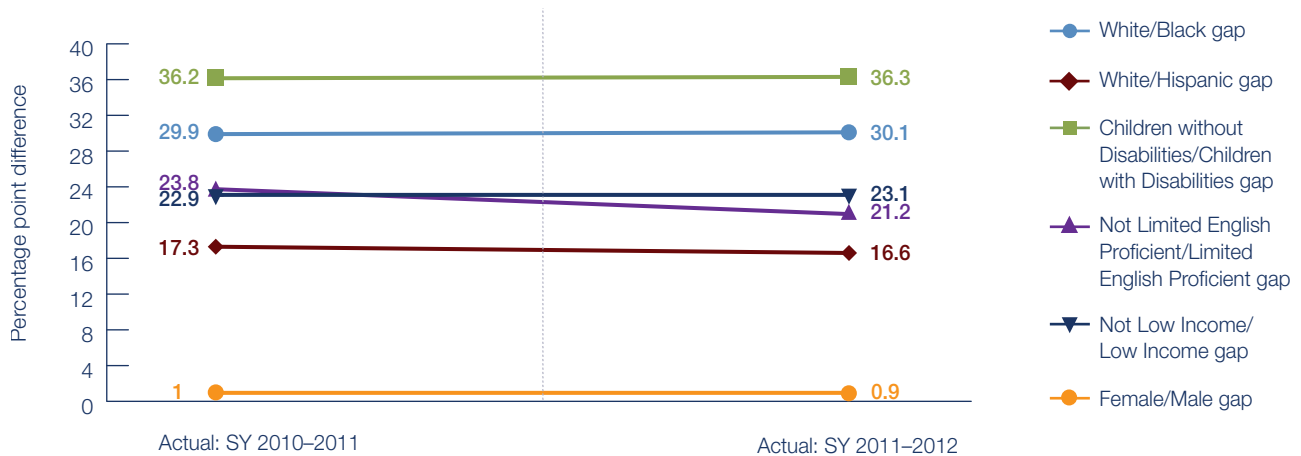
Preliminary SY 2011–2012 data reported as of: September 26, 2012

NOTE: Over the last two years, a number of States adopted new assessments and/or cut scores.

Numbers in the graph represent the gap in a school year between two subgroups on the State's ELA assessment. Achievement gaps were calculated by subtracting the percent of students scoring proficient in the lower-performing subgroup from the percent of students scoring proficient in the higher-performing subgroup to get the percentage point difference between the proficiency of the two subgroups. If the achievement gap narrowed between two subgroups, the line will slope downward. If the achievement gap increased between two subgroups, the line will slope upward.

For State-reported context, please refer to the Race to the Top APR at [www.rtt-apr.us](http://www.rtt-apr.us).

## Achievement Gap on Ohio's Mathematics Assessment



Preliminary SY 2011–2012 data reported as of: September 26, 2012

NOTE: Over the last two years, a number of States adopted new assessments and/or cut scores.

Numbers in the graph represent the gap in a school year between two subgroups on the State's ELA assessment. Achievement gaps were calculated by subtracting the percent of students scoring proficient in the lower-performing subgroup from the percent of students scoring proficient in the higher-performing subgroup to get the percentage point difference between the proficiency of the two subgroups. If the achievement gap narrowed between two subgroups, the line will slope downward. If the achievement gap increased between two subgroups, the line will slope upward.

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# Standards and Assessments

Implementing rigorous college- and career-ready standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and career is an integral aspect of education reform in all Race to the Top States.

## Supporting the transition to college- and career-ready standards and high-quality assessments

In June 2010, the Ohio Board of Education adopted the CCSS in ELA and mathematics, and revised Ohio academic content standards in science and social studies. In November 2011, Ohio announced its decision to become a governing State in PARCC.

### Standards

To assist LEAs with implementation of the CCSS, Ohio posted resources online, including a timeline for LEAs mapping how full transition and implementation will occur by SY 2013-2014, as well as models of curricula broken out by grade and subject.<sup>11</sup> In total, the State developed and posted 774 model curricula units for K-12 in ELA and mathematics and for pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade (pre-K-12) in science and social studies. Educators were encouraged to submit curricula resources, which were then vetted by ODE advisory groups using review rubrics and rating process guides to ensure rigor and quality prior to posting on ODE's website. Moreover, the State created feedback loops on the website to encourage and collect stakeholder and user responses to the posted resources.

Model curricula were not only posted online, but were also integrated into targeted professional development modules in spring 2012, which were available to all educators statewide. ODE trained 147 regional personnel and 100 State-level content-specific experts in ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies to be regional content facilitators (RCF) to facilitate the regional targeted professional development for educators. In addition, ODE personnel supported the targeted professional development work facilitated by RCFs during SY 2011-2012 reaching more than 20,000 educators. The State also developed formative instruction practice (FIP) modules that support the CCSS and new State standards for science and social studies, and trained 1000 FIP facilitators to implement these modules at the building level. Between January and June 2012, FIP facilitators trained over 7,000 educators. The State will develop additional modules focused on ways to integrate formative instruction with specific content in ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies, to be implemented in Year 3. The State also created a mechanism to track LEAs participating in curriculum-related awareness and professional development sessions and gather feedback to inform future sessions.

To foster high school-higher education alignment to the new standards, the State created a high school and IHE committee to develop resources and a plan to align the CCSS with the high school curriculum and IHE entrance requirements. In addition, the State awarded competitive grants to ten regional LEA and IHE partnerships to continue the work of aligning college readiness expectations to the CCSS. These regional teams will convene twice a year to share lessons learned and update a guidance document for statewide use.

### Assessments

Ohio became a governing member of PARCC in November 2011, and subsequently participated in assessment meetings and provided input on test design and implementation activities. ODE assembled 24 Ohio leaders representing educators in different regions, content areas, and student groups (*e.g.*, English learners, students with disabilities, etc.), to support assessment design and rollout. Ohio decided not to include any ODE staff on these teams, and instead focused on ensuring representation from K-12 sector, content areas, and student groups. The State's higher education stakeholders also continue to be involved in the PARCC work, serving alongside K-12 representatives on several PARCC workgroups.

The State created links and resources, raised awareness in the field about PARCC resources, and communicated to 700 participants via a joint webinar about the content and approach of the new PARCC assessments. Despite these communication efforts, the State received feedback from LEAs that it must work to provide even more concrete and timely updates related to PARCC assessment development and expectations for implementation.

Ohio also implemented a survey to identify and address technology requirements and gaps across LEAs. The results will inform implementation of a technology alignment tool that will be fully implemented by SY 2014-2015 and will incorporate PARCC resources as they become available. In addition, Ohio used webinars and other resources to communicate to LEAs PARCC's approach to assessments and the content for assessments. The webinar attracted 530 participants and was later posted online for public viewing. To address concerns related to CCSS and PARCC implementation timelines the State is considering how to administer a paper and pencil State assessment until SY 2014-2015 that incorporates both the Ohio standards and CCSS.

<sup>11</sup> State legislation (House Bill (HB) 1 of the 128th General Assembly) mandated the development of model curricula units aligned to the standards and new assessments.

# Standards and Assessments

To help educators transition to the new assessments, the State created and administered a sample online social studies assessment of 30 questions in April 2012. Through this assessment pilot, the State provided educators and students the opportunity to interact with web-based items in preparation for Ohio's future assessments. In total, over 32,000 students participated, representing 207 LEAs and 338 schools.

Ohio also continued its work piloting formative, performance-based, and kindergarten readiness assessments. During Year 2, the State held bimonthly conference meetings with formative assessment coaches to support the first cohort of formative assessment pilot schools, and began recruiting and preparing trainings for SY 2012-2013 to support the second and third cohorts of the pilot. In addition, the State brought together three cohorts of the Ohio Performance Assessment Pilot Project to create a task bank for performance-based assessments in ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies. The State will pilot the assessments in one high school and one elementary school, and recruit a fourth cohort for SY 2012-2013 to field test the performance-based assessment tasks created by the previous cohorts. Ohio temporarily delayed a partnership with the State of Maryland to launch a kindergarten readiness assessment in Year 2, in order to re-examine the scope and funding sources required for implementation. The State, working with the State of Maryland, is now in the development phase of the kindergarten readiness assessment, with plans to conduct the first pilot in late 2012.

To inform assessments in non-tested grades and subjects, the State designed mini competitive grants for LEAs to develop additional growth measures. Through a contract with Battelle for Kids (Battelle), Ohio awarded grants in winter 2011-2012 to 13 LEAs in the Ohio Appalachian Collaborative (OAC) that agreed to use a list of previously approved assessment types (*e.g.*, EVAAS, ACT, Terra Nova, and end-of-course exams) to gather data for growth measures in non-tested grades and subjects. The State will use the resulting data to generate value-added student growth measures for non-tested

grades and subjects. The State also released a request for vendor proposals to generate a more extensive list of assessment types that can be used by the second phase of grant applicants. The State must still identify ways to ensure the reliability of all student growth data, given State legislation that permits LEAs to select a variety of non-tested measures to determine student growth.

## Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

The State made progress in its efforts to support educators in the transition to revised standards and the CCSS by providing curricula resources and ongoing professional development. Moreover, the State established processes and feedback structures to ensure internal ongoing evaluation of its supports and progress in implementation. For assessments, the State identified best practices and will use these to inform future phases of implementation. ODE is creating and will administer a paper and pencil State assessment in SY 2013-2014 that includes existing items that align to both the existing Ohio standards and CCSS, to help educators prepare for the transition to the PARCC assessments in SY 2014-2015. In addition, the State's pilot formative assessment and performance-based assessment work allowed a portion of Ohio educators to experience multiple assessment types and structures that may help them adjust to the PARCC assessments when they become available.

As noted in feedback from LEAs, the State must work to provide even more concrete and timely updates related to PARCC assessment development and expectations for implementation. In addition, ODE must continue to address the uncertainty surrounding LEA-created student growth measures and their associated impact on reliability and transferability of student data. Finally, while the State has published a significant number of model curricula units on ODE's website, it must continue to review and refine internal processes to ensure these resources are of high quality.

# Data Systems to Support Instruction

Statewide longitudinal data systems (SLDS) and instructional improvement systems (IIS) enhance the ability of States to effectively manage, use, and analyze education data to support instruction. Race to the Top States are working to ensure that their data systems are accessible to key stakeholders and that the data support educators and decision-makers in their efforts to improve instruction and increase student achievement.

## Fully implementing an SLDS

Ohio is using Race to the Top funds to enhance its existing SLDS and associated data tools to create a pre-kindergarten through higher education (P-20) longitudinal data system by June 2013.

## Accessing and using State data

In Year 2, the State made progress in linking data for its K-12 and IHE students. Despite a slight delay due to administrative procedures, in spring 2012 the State completed assigning Statewide Student Identifiers (SSIDs) to K-12 students and students enrolling in State public IHEs. In addition, Ohio required IHEs to add SSIDs to their student database for future reporting to OBR.

The State also analyzed current data tools available to LEAs, identified the redundancies, and designed a portal to facilitate the use and retrieval of data. This resulting web portal will eventually house all statewide data tools, streamlining access and providing resources to guide users to relevant data tools. However, the State has not fully established how all the data components (State and local IISs, various data tools, the web portal, and data gathering tools embedded in other initiatives) will be organized together or communicated to the field. In addition, the State is still developing a plan for incorporating feedback loops in the data system to allow educators to comment on the usefulness and quality of data tools.

To help teachers and principals utilize teacher-student value-added reports, the State provided professional development sessions and 23 online classes. In total, over 70 percent of LEAs statewide participated in these sessions, with 700 people attending webinars and 1,000 principals attending a principal-specific professional development session. In June 2012, all LEAs had identified student-teacher linkages and by September 2012, the State calculated value-added measures and generated value-added reports for 69 percent of all 4th-8th grade ELA and/or mathematics teachers (representing 100 percent of eligible teachers in LEAs participating in Race to the Top).

The State also piloted a software program in SY 2011-2012 for linking teachers to individual students, and based on feedback from the field, decided to forego its plans to develop its own State version

and instead purchase this software for LEA use throughout and beyond the life of the grant.

## Using data to improve instruction

During Year 2, Ohio worked with the State of Massachusetts on an RFP for cross-State procurement of a State IIS, but faced significant delays. Vendor selection, determining how to integrate State IIS and LEA IIS data, identification of user roles and integration components, and development of a strategy to effectively communicate the IIS to LEAs all slowed the State's progress. The State is currently in the final negotiations with a vendor, but remains eight months delayed on its approved timeline to award a contract for the development of a State IIS, assuming the contract is awarded by winter 2013.

The State reports that the system, once developed, will allow LEAs to share resources and aggregate data, curricula, and other resources to guide their Race to the Top work. Some resources will be available to all LEAs, but the data aggregation and analysis features of the IIS will be available only to LEAs that purchase the system. To encourage widespread use of the system, Ohio will allow LEAs not participating in the Race to the Top grant to purchase the IIS system at the same reduced price as those participating. The State also developed a gap analysis tool to assist LEAs in assessing the alignment of their local IIS with the State's IIS. LEAs will be able to use this tool to determine whether or not their local systems can be used in lieu of the State's system.

The State struggled to communicate to LEAs in Year 2 about its State IIS development strategy and implementation timeline. As a consequence, the State acknowledges that many LEAs remain uncertain about elements of the IIS, including the components and cost of the system, how the system will function, the kind of data it will house, and the State's progress in developing this system. Moreover, the State has not released the IIS gap analysis tool nor made clear to LEAs its requirements for an LEA's IIS system in order for it to be "aligned" with the State system. There may be a reluctance on the part of LEAs to adopt the State IIS until this information, as well as the proposed cost of implementing the system, is clarified.

# Data Systems to Support Instruction

In addition to planning the development of its IIS, Ohio worked with Battelle to support LEAs' implementation of formative instructional practices (FIP). LEAs participating in the State's Race to the Top plan selected one of three FIP models to implement, based on their local context: a comprehensive approach with FIP facilitators in each building, a high level approach with two LEA FIP facilitators that rotate among schools, or a pilot approach with FIP facilitators in early adopter schools and gradual expansion over time of FIP facilitators serving the remaining schools. The State provided formative instruction services to all participating LEAs, including 56 customized web-based ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies modules for grades pre-K-12; formative instruction awareness professional development sessions; and online training modules for LEAs. The State also assigned FIP specialists at the regional level to train and monitor school-level FIP facilitators, and work with the participating LEAs and schools to administer formative instruction professional development.

## Formative Instruction Practice (FIP) facilitators

Ohio trained 1000 FIP facilitator coaches to implement the State-developed formative instruction modules to support educators as they transition to the CCSS and new State standards for science and social studies. FIP facilitators will continue to support educators in Year 3 using additional formative instruction modules covering specific subject area content.

## Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

The State met its target of generating value-added reports for eligible teachers in 60 percent of its LEAs statewide (representing 100 percent of eligible teachers in LEAs participating in Race to the Top) for SY 2011-2012 and has moved forward with activities to expand value-added report awareness and accessibility. The State's SSID assignment work is on track, and the data tools and web portal design are moving ahead as planned, although the State has challenging work ahead to ensure alignment of data components across the plan and to communicate the web portal functionality to users.

The State's work to award a contract for the development of its IIS is delayed, and may be delayed further depending on the pace with which the procurement activities take place, as well as on the capacity of the selected vendor to support the complex requirements of a multi-State system. In addition, the State must finalize important decisions related to the nuances of this system, such as the integration of State IIS and local IIS data, identification of user roles and integration components, and a communication strategy of the benefits of the State IIS to encourage LEAs to purchase the system. Without clarifying these critical pieces to the field, the State will have trouble developing and implementing the system during the grant period. Moreover, the State must clarify to LEAs what the State IIS will be able to do, what data it will house, and the additional functionality supported beyond the statewide resources available to all LEAs. Until these components are clarified, the number of LEAs willing to utilize an operational State IIS will likely remain unknown.



# Great Teachers and Leaders

Race to the Top States are developing comprehensive systems of educator effectiveness by adopting clear approaches to measuring student growth; designing and implementing rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals; conducting annual evaluations that include timely and constructive feedback; and using evaluation information to inform professional development, compensation, promotion, retention, and tenure decisions. In addition, Race to the Top States are providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals, ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals, improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs, and providing effective supports to all educators.

## Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance

### Educator evaluation systems

In Year 2, Ohio piloted the observation component of its OTES models, continued to support LEAs piloting the OPES model, provided resources to support evaluators and educators in implementation, and began determining student growth component requirements.

In SY 2011-2012, the State conducted an “early adopter” pilot of the observation component of its OTES model. One hundred thirty-six of the State’s LEAs participating in Race to the Top volunteered to pilot the system two years in advance of the recommended statewide pilot in SY 2012-2013 and required full implementation in SY 2013-2014. The State engaged in weekly communication with piloting LEAs, and provided opportunities for feedback as well as OTES professional development.

In addition, the State engaged in extensive communication efforts with all its LEAs to raise understanding of, and investment in, the teacher evaluation system, in preparation for full implementation of both OTES and OPES by SY 2013-2014. The State developed two online modules to inform educators on the OTES model for those that were not part of the early adopter pilot in SY 2011-2012. These modules will complement the communication and training support provided by ODE and both State teacher associations (Ohio Education Association and Ohio Federation of Teachers) in SY 2012-2013. Moreover, the State provided training and credentialing for evaluators of teachers, and created ongoing resources to support OTES implementation such as an OTES Model and Resource packet and an OTES frequently asked questions and answers document.

The State also continued its rollout of the observation component of its OPES model, which some early adopters implemented ahead of the pilot for all participating LEAs in SY 2012-2013. Additionally,

the State’s Buckeye Association of School Administrators, comprised of district superintendents and other school leaders, made trainers available to all LEAs adopting OPES.<sup>12</sup> Trainers provided feedback to early adopters and identified other resources available through the ESCs, utilizing a State-developed electronic presentation and evaluation manual to ensure consistency of trainings statewide. The State also supported principal evaluators through a multi-day OPES training and an online principal evaluator credentialing system and assessment. Ohio also created refresher courses and materials for principal evaluators, annual training sessions, and additional evaluator resources, but is still working to determine the frequency of and process for recalibrating principal evaluators.

The State is concerned about the potential variation and quality among locally developed systems and the transferability of results and processes from district to district since LEAs in Ohio can either adopt the OTES and/or OPES models or adopt their own evaluation systems that meet the State’s evaluation requirements. To mitigate these concerns, the State developed an OTES Alignment Tool<sup>13</sup> rubric in Year 2. ODE provided this tool for LEAs to identify whether or not LEAs’ local systems align to the OTES model, and to help address questions regarding the evaluation components and rubric used during observations. In addition, the State required all LEAs statewide to participate in OTES and OPES training, and created an electronic evaluation system for LEAs to input ratings and provide supporting documentation. Prior to launching the system statewide in September 2012, the State piloted it and held training sessions and webinars for participating LEAs. The State will periodically audit LEAs that are implementing a locally developed evaluation system aligned to the State model to ensure the data are reliable and valid, and will potentially require these LEAs to upload supporting documentation to substantiate data in the evaluation system.

In Year 2, the State hired an external evaluator to refine the OTES and OPES models. These evaluations will assess OTES and OPES implementation and conduct surveys and case studies to gauge the impact on educator effectiveness and student achievement,

<sup>12</sup> While Race to the Top funding will support OPES implementation in participating LEAs, House Bill (HB) 153 legislation (effective June 30, 2011) requires LEAs statewide to implement a principal evaluation system by SY 2013-2014.

<sup>13</sup> For OPES, ODE required LEAs wishing to implement an aligned principal evaluation system to provide a signed statement of assurance from the superintendent that the system aligned to the OPES model. The State will closely monitor these LEAs to ensure alignment to the OPES model and fidelity of implementation.

# Great Teachers and Leaders

sustainability, and best practices. This information, as well as feedback from the statewide pilots in SY 2012-2013, will help inform future requirements for and implementation of the State's evaluation systems.

While the State has made significant progress on the observation component of its evaluation systems, it is still working to clarify how student growth measures will be calculated and used in evaluation results, as well as how ODE will inform and support LEAs as they determine their student growth measures. The State has created initial guidance for LEAs related to determining and using student growth measures for evaluation results, but must work to ensure a clear and consistent message related to the student growth component of teacher and principal evaluations. For more information on the State's work to develop additional measures of student growth, see *Standards and Assessments*.

## Performance-based compensation

In Year 2, Ohio selected a contractor to support the implementation of its compensation reform efforts. The State also established a performance-based compensation system (PBCS) work team to review the logistics, history, and terminology of a PBCS. In 2012, 22 LEAs expressed interest in participating on the PBCS work team, and the State will accept proposals in late fall 2012 for LEAs interested in piloting a PBCS in SY 2012-2013. The State acknowledges that implementation of the pilot will depend on the interpretation of legislative language concerning performance-based compensation requirements<sup>14</sup> for Race to the Top participating LEAs.

## Statewide tenure review

Ohio drafted a statewide tenure review framework that provides guidance to LEAs for the key components besides years of service and credentials, such as teacher performance, that LEAs can use when making tenure determinations. The State finalized the framework guidance document in Year 2 after gathering feedback from the Educator Standards Board and participating LEAs.

## Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals

In Year 2, Ohio continued to implement its TeachOhio program and the Woodrow Wilson Foundation STEM Teacher Fellowship Program to address the distribution of effective teachers and principals. Through TeachOhio, educators receive certification as highly qualified teachers, complete the requirements necessary to receive credentials for the subjects they teach, and work with

partnering ESCs to obtain additional licensures. In April 2012, Ohio approved applications from 15 ESCs to implement the program, which included recruiting candidates, conducting trainings, sponsoring IHE trainings, and providing other credentialing services. By the end of the grant period, Ohio plans to support 675 educators to address gaps in highly qualified designations, credentials, and/or licensure requirements. The State did not reach its goal of supporting 175 educators in Year 1, but was able to support over 300 educators in Year 2.

Ohio expanded its partnership with the Woodrow Wilson Foundation STEM Teacher Fellowship Program to attract individuals with backgrounds in the STEM fields to teach in high-need schools. In Year 2, OBR continued to support the 57 fellows of the 2011 cohort trained in Year 1. In addition, OBR partnered with seven IHEs to train the 2012 cohort, made up of 83 fellows. Due to the withdrawal of one partner IHE, however, the State anticipates missing its goal of training 375 fellows in the STEM field by the end of the grant period by roughly 15 fellows.

Also in Year 2, Ohio developed and launched the Equitable Distribution of Highly Effective and Effective Educators<sup>15</sup> analysis tool with four piloting LEAs. This tool creates public reports on educator distribution in an effort to ensure LEAs are effectively implementing equity plans and strategies. The State identified LEAs to implement the educator effectiveness tool and generate ratings by the end of SY 2012-2013. However, due to the timing of this data collection, the State will not have educator effectiveness ratings available in time to meet its approved timeline for publicly reporting and incorporating educator effectiveness data into the Educator Equity Longitudinal report and webpage, nor will it be able to review local equity plans to ensure effective educator distribution strategies.

Ohio launched a Teaching and Learning Conditions (TLC) survey in Year 2 as a part of its Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL) initiative. The State invited all of its 75 low performing LEAs participating in Race to the Top to participate in the TELL initiative and TLC survey, but only received interest from 14 schools. These schools completed the survey, and received an analysis of their results in May 2012. The State used this data to inform a research action plan for how to improve teaching and learning conditions in low achieving schools. In response to the low participation, ODE opened the TELL initiative to all LEAs, including those not participating in Race to the Top. The State took these steps to foster higher participation and help create an early cohort of participants, a necessary component to the development of tools and resources that can support future participants.

<sup>14</sup> House Bill (HB) 153 legislation (effective June 30, 2011) specifies requirements for how LEAs implement performance based compensation (PBC). Specifically, HB 153 requires Race to the Top participating LEAs to comply with provisions to implement PBC in accordance with their Race to the Top Scopes of Work. HB 153 also provides parameters by which all non-participating LEAs will have to implement PBC. While the legislation does not specifically address the requirements for participating LEAs that did not outline PBC plans as part of their Scopes of Work, staff from both ODE and the Governor's office are acting under an understanding that participating LEAs would be required to follow their Scopes of Work and thus would not need to implement the PBC outlined in HB 153 for non-participating LEAs.

<sup>15</sup> The analysis tool was originally called the Equitable Distribution of Effective and Highly Effective Educators (EDEHE) tool.

# Great Teachers and Leaders

The State also held several multi-day METworks trainings to provide information and resources for how LEAs can identify and implement strategies to recruit and hire teachers and administrators. In addition, ODE provided training to LEAs related to its revised Teacher Exit Survey tool for collecting teacher attrition and retention data to inform equity plans. While the State encouraged LEAs to participate, none completed the survey as of September 2012, and thus the State could not conduct analyses to inform revisions to equity plans. In Year 3, the State will focus on increasing awareness and communication around this tool, and on encouraging districts to participate.

## Cincinnati Public Schools' Principal Leadership Academy

Cincinnati Public Schools, in collaboration with the University of Cincinnati, implemented a Principal Leadership Academy for assistant principals, to support the development of leaders and establish a cadre of assistant principals who will be ready to serve as principals in the district when openings become available. This academy, in place prior to but since augmented with Race to the Top funding, has graduated hundreds of educators to date.

## Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs

In Year 2, Ohio required educator preparation programs to implement licensure enhancements and new standards. The State required additional reports from those IHEs that were not using the updated standards as of spring 2012, and continued to work with those institutions to ensure compliance. In addition, OBR, with active support and participation from the deans of Ohio's IHEs, drafted educator preparation quality metrics that outline how to evaluate the success of education preparation programs, including the ability to track graduates within the State. OBR also revised its review and approval process for preparation programs, to include data on passage rates, mentor selection criteria, and specific admission criteria. OBR received approval from the Chancellor on recommendations for revising the principal preparation program review, and began to pilot and train program staff on the new review process.

OBR also revised its education preparation program report card to include data on performance on licensure exams, value-added growth metrics, teacher performance assessments, employer surveys, and partnerships with high-need schools.<sup>16</sup> The State provided training sessions for IHEs in fall 2012 and will release the educator

preparation program report cards in December 2012, a three month delay due to late collection and aggregation of data used to inform the report cards. Separate report cards will be created for teacher and principal programs. Each report card will include data such as Praxis 2 scores, value-added scores for grades 4-8 mathematics and ELA, academic measures (e.g., grade point average and ACT scores), one-year residency data, accreditation data, and excellence in innovation data.

OBR brought together members of educator preparation programs and educators from mathematics, ELA, and science departments to jointly create high-quality preparation content that will prepare graduates to teach using the CCSS. In addition, all 51 of Ohio's IHEs agreed to pilot a teacher performance assessment (TPA) model for their educator preparation program by the end of Year 3, with four IHEs piloting in Year 2. The model requires program participants to pass a performance-based assessment to be eligible for graduation.

Finally, OBR established a performance-based funding committee to determine how leadership metrics will be incorporated into the funding formula. While the State was almost a year delayed in hiring the director for this project to begin this work, it has made progress in Year 2 by establishing the committee and beginning to determine the performance funding formula for educator preparation programs at Ohio's public IHEs that are incorporating the final approved program metrics. The State has to clarify in Year 3 the formula weights and make funding recommendations to OBR leadership based on the results of the pilot report card for preparation programs.

## Providing effective support to teachers and principals

Throughout Year 2, Ohio provided support to teachers and principals in several ways, and frequently required educator participation. For example, Ohio required all participating LEAs to develop and submit for State approval an LEA professional development plan that documented and aligned professional development opportunities for all LEA education reform efforts. In conjunction with the LEA professional development plans, State-level specialists also assessed LEAs' professional development needs via an internal rubric and identified problem areas, triaged supports, and leveraged best practices from other regions and LEAs. As a result, the State recognized the need to improve the LEA professional development plan submission, review, and approval process, and has refined the process for subsequent years.

Ohio also established mentoring and training opportunities for teachers, principals, and central office leaders. The State's Resident

<sup>16</sup>While individual educators and school buildings will have access to individual value-added growth scores, legislation prohibits the State (including ODE and OBR) from accessing this level of individual data. Thus, the value-added growth metrics included in the program report cards will reflect an aggregated score across all educators coming out of a given preparation program.

# Great Teachers and Leaders

Educator (RE) Program, a four-year induction program for beginning teachers, provided intensive support to novice teachers by creating and strengthening professional support structures for teachers and principals. Ohio worked in collaboration with five ESCs to establish and provide training sessions in summer and fall 2012 for mentors of beginning teachers, including four advanced RE mentor training modules for experienced mentors and one RT training module for principals. The State also encouraged peer-to-peer support via its Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) initiative. The State selected nine LEAs to pilot a PAR model to support OTES implementation in SY 2012-2013. Selected LEAs chose between several PAR structures (*e.g.*, releasing lead teachers part time to support and coach, rather than evaluate, struggling veteran teachers) to establish peer support structures integrated into implementation of their evaluation systems. The State, in collaboration with its contractor, provided technical assistance to educators and administrators of PAR-piloting LEAs, and began planning ongoing training sessions and LEA meetings to occur throughout Year 3.

To support new principals, the State collaborated with a team of 30 stakeholders representing superintendents, principals, teachers, and regional educational support staff to develop a principal mentorship model to support beginning principals. In Year 2, the State held a competitive grant competition for LEAs and ESCs that wanted to pilot the model, and plans to select grantees in late 2012 for full implementation of the pilot in SY 2013-2014. The Buckeye Association of School Administrators also implemented a leadership training program for participating LEAs' central office leaders, training its second cohort of educators by the end of Year 2.

Ohio continued its work with Battelle to support the OAC, an initiative targeting 22 rural LEAs, and assigned a regional specialist to each OAC LEA. The OAC's primary activities in Year 2 included training and supporting teachers and principals to improve data use, assisting LEAs to better meet the needs of rural students, and helping LEAs foster improved community relationships. In addition, OAC LEAs participated in a pilot study to help determine if OAC participation improves value-added scores.

## Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

The State identified early adopters to pilot the observation component of OTES and OPES in SY 2011-2012, and is on track to fully implement evaluation systems by SY 2013-2014. The State is still clarifying how student growth measures will be calculated and used in evaluation results, and must clearly and consistently communicate with and support LEAs as they determine their student growth measures and incorporate this data into their teacher and principal evaluations.

The State provided numerous supports to teachers and principals, including training and mentoring opportunities, online resources to support instruction, and opportunities to participate in surveys and projects to inform State practice. Based on anecdotal feedback from educators, the State believes these supports are meeting high expectations of quality. While the State made great progress in these efforts, it was unable to meet its timeline for gathering and using educator effectiveness ratings to inform educator distribution strategies. In addition, in order to increase participation in the State's METworks and TELL initiatives, the State must revise its communication and outreach strategies.

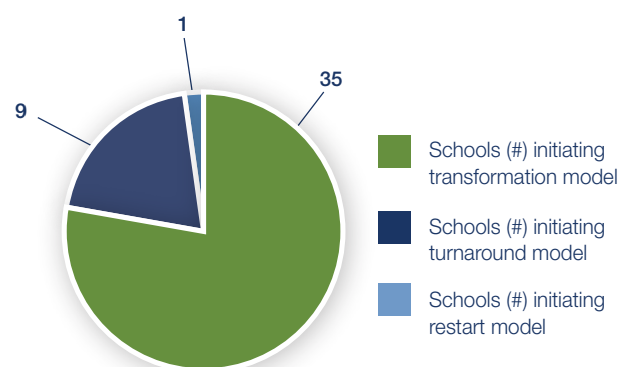
The State made headway in developing educator preparation program quality metrics, revising program report cards to include a variety of performance indicators, enhancing its program review process to align with the new metrics, and increasing communication to LEAs about new educator preparation initiatives. However, the State faced delays in releasing preparation program report cards and initiating its work on performance-based funding for IHE work, and on ensuring that it has the structures in place to assess the impact of its initiatives related to preparation programs' licensure enhancements, revised metrics and review processes, and report cards.



# Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

Race to the Top States are supporting LEAs' implementation of far-reaching reforms to turn around lowest-achieving schools by implementing one of four school intervention models.

School Intervention Models Initiated in Ohio in SY 2011–2012



This data represents schools that initiated (that is, school(s) in the first year of implementation of) one of the four intervention models in SY 2011–2012.

For State-reported context, please refer to the Race to the Top APR at [www.rtt-apr.us](http://www.rtt-apr.us).

ODE completed its first quarter of monitoring 79 School Improvement Grant (SIG) schools (32 schools in Cohort 1 and 45 schools in Cohort 2)<sup>18</sup> in September 2011, and provided written feedback to each school. In addition, as a condition for receiving renewed funding for SIG grants, each identified school was provided recommendations for implementation by the State's Office of School Turnaround. Each school then developed work plans incorporating monitoring feedback and renewal recommendations, and engaged in weekly status checks with their transformation specialist. The State also conducted school-level needs assessments of its PLAs and provided evaluations of student academic achievement, education practices, and school climate. In addition, the State completed diagnostic reviews for additional schools identified by an early warning system (early warning schools) to inform revisions to the schools' improvement plans.

In June 2012, the State contracted with the Institute for Research and Reform in Education to evaluate the extent to which these State supports, as well as the efforts of each lowest-achieving school, are impacting student achievement. The evaluation, due to the ODE in June 2013, will review evaluation documentation; interview transformation specialists; and identify and interview leaders of high performing schools to provide insights regarding the fidelity of implementation of the selected intervention model.

## Aligning school reform initiatives

Ohio continued to support and monitor its PLAs in Year 2. ODE assigned transformation specialists to each PLA to meet with schools weekly and provide supports and track progress. These specialists then convened to identify systematic monitoring issues across schools with regard to the quality of work and fidelity of implementation, and then differentiated supports accordingly. A total of three site visits were held throughout the year to monitor progress and determine continuation funding for schools based on increasing student achievement. ODE offered 16 technical assistance sessions in January 2012 to identified PLAs on the SIG renewal process, with customized content to address identified needs of each PLA. The number of sessions offered increased from Year 1, as the State learned it was more useful to PLAs if sessions were smaller and more targeted to individual PLAs' needs. In addition, the State conducted a best practice conference for its PLA and early warning schools in June 2012. Furthermore, Ohio started to identify successes and best practices of PLAs' family and community engagement work to refine these initiatives and make best practices available to entire school districts.<sup>17</sup>

The State's School Turnaround Leader Program, a training program required for all SIG cohort 1 and 2 school principals and assistant principals focused on developing skills that promote intervention results as well as creating leadership succession planning for challenging schools, graduated its third cohort of 50 principals, resulting in 150 total graduates of the program to date. The State also interviewed and held focus groups with program graduates to gather feedback to inform enhancements and revisions to the program for future cohorts.

Despite this progress, Ohio faced some difficulties implementing some of its supports for PLAs. The State provided differentiated processes, resources, and supports for PLAs that deviated from the traditional public school model—namely, community schools and virtual schools—but continues to struggle with how to best support these unique school models. While the State attempted to meet with all community schools (via a vendor) to identify additional supports, this effort was not successful in reaching all the schools and thus the State is still determining how to identify and gather resources to support these schools in the future. Ohio continues to work on a plan for how it will sustain its school intervention efforts once Race to the Top and SIG funding ends, building off its current work with local ESCs to try and build statewide capacity.

<sup>17</sup> Family and community engagement initiatives were required by legislation for all PLAs, per House Bill (HB) 1 and later, by HB30.

<sup>18</sup> Seventy-five of the 77 identified SIG PLAs are participating in Race to the Top.



# Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

## Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

The State continuously communicated and engaged with its identified PLAs and early warning schools through periodic monitoring visits and ongoing supports. The State also selected a vendor to evaluate the extent to which the State supports, as well as the efforts of each PLA, are making an impact on student

achievement. In addition, the State's Office of School Turnaround analyzed the student achievement data for all schools to identify schools that demonstrated progress toward raising student achievement. Further, ODE developed and provided numerous resources including conferences, technical assistance sessions, and leadership programs targeted to PLAs. In Year 3, the State must continue to implement its plans to use evaluations and monitoring feedback to ensure continuous improvement of its lowest-achieving schools.

## Emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)

### State's STEM initiatives

The State contracted with ONET to oversee the Ohio STEM Learning Network (OSLN). Cooperatively, these two organizations provide technical assistance, support, and monitoring for those LEAs that selected and were awarded STEM innovation grants. The other innovative grant models such as AVID, Asia Society-ISSN, Early College High School, New Tech, and other approved initiatives will be monitored for fidelity by ONET innovation specialists. In Year 2, OSLN distributed to LEAs a list of STEM initiatives they could implement and created monitoring tools to track and evaluate progress in implementing innovative school models. ONET assigned innovation specialists, provided trainings, and completed monitoring visits for all innovation grantees. In addition, the State held an Innovative Grant Partnership Summit in August 2012, and began planning for three Innovation Zone Leadership Summits to focus on building capacity for sustaining innovation work after the grant period.

ONET designed multiple tools to determine implementation progress of the LEAs that received innovation grants. In response to early Year 2 challenges to assess the quality and implementation of various STEM efforts, the State began cataloging classroom observations, in particular evidence of implementation, to inform subsequent technical assistance and support from ONET's innovation specialists. The State also conducted onsite monitoring visits using the ONET Innovation Scoring Rubric to gauge implementation progress, and disseminated a provider collaboration report to facilitate interactions between LEAs implementing the same innovation model. Utilizing these tools, ONET collected student data analyses and examples of successful stakeholder engagement strategies, developed resources related to instructional pedagogy, and investigated the extent to which LEAs' facilities and infrastructures, professional learning models, and program study supported implementation of the innovative models.

The State also established seven regional STEM hubs, which specialize in the services and needs unique to that region. The regional hubs each hosted trainings to share best practices with other schools in their region, and forge partnerships with the business community, IHEs, and between LEAs. Each hub event was attended by ONET personnel, who also provided regular technical assistance to LEAs. Building on these services, OSLN also held seven hub-specific conferences, followed by an annual statewide STEM conference.

The OSLN also supported 40 of the 83 fellows participating in the 2012 Woodrow Wilson Foundation STEM Teacher Fellowship Program. Fellows from the University of Akron, University of Cincinnati, and Ohio State University received training in STEM content in preparation for teaching in STEM fields at high-need schools. For more information on the Woodrow Wilson Foundation STEM Teacher Fellowship Program, see *Great Teachers and Leaders*.

## Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

The State continued implementation of its Woodrow Wilson Foundation STEM Teacher Fellowship Program, but may face challenges reaching its target of training 375 educators in the STEM field by the end of the grant period. The State monitored and provided supports for innovative STEM grant recipients by putting in place structures to foster learning statewide through STEM hubs and Innovation Zones. While efforts are underway to expand the number of LEAs implementing a STEM initiative at their schools, the State has just begun to assess the quality of these plans. Additional time is needed to determine the lasting impact or effect of this work on students' future STEM careers and majors.

## Looking Ahead to Year 3

According to the State, during Year 3 of implementation, Ohio will continue to reevaluate and revise its project management structures to strengthen its implementation of Race to the Top and its supports for participating LEAs. In particular, ODE will enhance its outreach to stakeholders beyond the traditional education community, through an expanded statewide engagement strategy to help the State sustain its educational reform efforts beyond the grant period. In addition, the State will continue to provide direct support to and solicit thoughtful feedback from educators in the field, to inform continuous improvement of its processes over time.

The State will continue to implement, enhance, and assess project activities initiated in Years 1 and 2. ODE will provide additional curricula resources and ongoing professional development trainings for educators transitioning to the CCSS, provide teacher-student value-added reports to 100 percent of eligible teachers statewide, administer a paper and pencil State assessment in SY 2013-2014 that includes standards that are in both the Ohio standards and CCSS, and continue the development of formative, performance-based, and kindergarten readiness assessments. The State will work to provide clear and consistent updates to LEAs related to PARCC assessment development and expectations for implementation, and clarify the uncertainty surrounding the development and use of

student growth measures for LEAs to use as a component of educator evaluation ratings.

In Year 3, Ohio will develop its data tools and web portal design, ensure alignment of data components across the plan, and communicate the web portal functionality to users. The State's work related to its IIS will be crucial in Year 3, as ODE must work quickly to define the functionality and components of the system, as well as make it available for LEA use. Furthermore, the State must communicate clearly with LEAs in order to ensure implementation of the system during the grant period.

The State will also implement its statewide pilot of OTES and OPES for all LEAs participating in Race to the Top in SY 2012-2013. Of particular importance will be the State's ability to provide LEAs with information for how to develop or determine student growth value-added measures, particularly for non-tested grades and subjects.

Furthermore, the State will continue to support its lowest-achieving schools and innovation grantees, as well as share lessons learned throughout the State through its Innovation Zones and STEM hubs. Finally, the State will continue to investigate how to measure and evaluate the quality and impact of all of its reform efforts, in order to inform ongoing revisions and continuous improvement over the course of the grant.

## Budget

For the State's expenditures through June 30, 2012, please see the APR at, [www.rtt-apr.us](http://www.rtt-apr.us).

For State budget information, see <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/state-scope-of-work/index.html>.

For the State's fiscal accountability and oversight report, please see, <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/performance.html>.

# Glossary

**Alternative routes to certification:** Pathways to certification that are authorized under the State's laws or regulations that allow the establishment and operation of teacher and administrator preparation programs in the State, and that have the following characteristics (in addition to standard features such as demonstration of subject-matter mastery, and high-quality instruction in pedagogy and in addressing the needs of all students in the classroom including English learners and students with disabilities): (a) can be provided by various types of qualified providers, including both institutions of higher education and other providers operating independently from institutions of higher education; (b) are selective in accepting candidates; (c) provide supervised, school-based experiences and ongoing support such as effective mentoring and coaching; (d) significantly limit the amount of coursework required or have options to test out of courses; and (e) upon completion, award the same level of certification that traditional preparation programs award upon completion.

**Amendment requests:** In the event that adjustments are needed to a State's approved Race to the Top plan, the grantee must submit an amendment request to the Department for consideration. Such requests may be prompted by an updated assessment of needs in that area, revised cost estimates, lessons learned from prior implementation efforts, or other circumstances. Grantees may propose revisions to goals, activities, timelines, budget, or annual targets, provided that the following conditions are met: the revisions do not result in the grantee's failure to comply with the terms and conditions of this award and the program's statutory and regulatory provisions; the revisions do not change the overall scope and objectives of the approved proposal; and the Department and the grantee mutually agree in writing to the revisions. The Department has sole discretion to determine whether to approve the revisions or modifications. If approved by the Department, a letter with a description of the amendment and any relevant conditions will be sent notifying the grantee of approval. (For additional information please see <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/amendments/index.html>.)

**America COMPETES Act elements:** The twelve indicators specified in section 6401(e)(2)(D) of the America COMPETES Act are: (1) a unique statewide student identifier that does not permit a student to be individually identified by users of the system; (2) student-level enrollment, demographic, and program participation information; (3) student-level information about the points at which students exit, transfer in, transfer out, drop out, or complete P-16 education programs; (4) the capacity to communicate with higher education data systems; (5) a State data audit system assessing data quality, validity, and reliability; (6) yearly test records of individual students with respect to assessments under section 1111(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)); (7) information on students not tested by grade and

subject; (8) a teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students; (9) student-level transcript information, including information on courses completed and grades earned; (10) student-level college-readiness test scores; (11) information regarding the extent to which students transition successfully from secondary school to postsecondary education, including whether students enroll in remedial coursework; and (12) other information determined necessary to address alignment and adequate preparation for success in postsecondary education.

**American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA):** On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed into law the ARRA, historic legislation designed to stimulate the economy, support job creation, and invest in critical sectors, including education. The Department of Education received a \$97.4 billion appropriation.

**Annual Performance Report (APR):** Report submitted by each grantee with outcomes to date, performance against the measures established in its application, and other relevant data. The Department uses data included in the APRs to provide Congress and the public with detailed information regarding each State's progress on meeting the goals outlined in its application. The final State APRs are found at [www.rtt-apr.us](http://www.rtt-apr.us).

**College- and career-ready standards:** State-developed standards that build toward college and career readiness by the time students graduate from high school.

**Common Core State Standards (CCSS):** Kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) English language arts and mathematics standards developed in collaboration with a variety of stakeholders including States, governors, chief State school officers, content experts, teachers, school administrators, and parents. The standards establish clear and consistent goals for learning that will prepare America's children for success in college and careers. As of December 2011, the CCSS were adopted by 45 States and the District of Columbia.

The **education reform areas** for Race to the Top: (1) Standards and Assessments: Adopting rigorous college- and career-ready standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and career; (2) Data Systems to Support Instruction: Building data systems that measure student success and support educators and decision-makers in their efforts to improve instruction and increase student achievement; (3) Great Teachers and Great Leaders: Recruiting, developing, retaining, and rewarding effective teachers and principals; and (4) Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools: Supporting LEAs' implementation of far-reaching reforms to turn around lowest-achieving schools by implementing school intervention models.

**Effective teacher:** A teacher whose students achieve acceptable rates (*e.g.*, at least one grade level in an academic year) of student growth

(as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that teacher effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). Supplemental measures may include, for example, multiple observation-based assessments of teacher performance.

**High-minority school:** A school designation defined by the State in a manner consistent with its Teacher Equity Plan. The State should provide, in its Race to the Top application, the definition used.

**High-poverty school:** Consistent with section 1111(h)(1)(C)(viii) of the ESEA, a school in the highest quartile of schools in the State with respect to poverty level, using a measure of poverty determined by the State.

**Highly effective teacher:** A teacher whose students achieve high rates (e.g., one and one-half grade levels in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that teacher effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). Supplemental measures may include, for example, multiple observation-based assessments of teacher performance or evidence of leadership roles (which may include mentoring or leading professional learning communities) that increase the effectiveness of other teachers in the school or LEA.

**Instructional improvement systems (IIS):** Technology-based tools and other strategies that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with meaningful support and actionable data to systemically manage continuous instructional improvement, including such activities as instructional planning; gathering information (e.g., through formative assessments (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements), interim assessments (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements), summative assessments, and looking at student work and other student data); analyzing information with the support of rapid-time (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements) reporting; using this information to inform decisions on appropriate next instructional steps; and evaluating the effectiveness of the actions taken. Such systems promote collaborative problem-solving and action planning; they may also integrate instructional data with student-level data such as attendance, discipline, grades, credit accumulation, and student survey results to provide early warning indicators of a student's risk of educational failure.

**Invitational priorities:** Areas of focus that the Department invited States to address in their Race to the Top applications. Applicants did not earn extra points for addressing these focus areas, but many grantees chose to create and fund activities to advance reforms in these areas.

**Involved LEAs:** LEAs that choose to work with the State to implement those specific portions of the State's plan that necessitate full or nearly-full statewide implementation, such as transitioning to a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). Involved LEAs do not receive a share of the 50 percent of a State's grant award that it must subgrant to LEAs in accordance with section 14006(c) of the ARRA, but States may provide other funding to involved LEAs under the State's Race to the Top grant in a manner that is consistent with the State's application.

**Participating LEAs:** LEAs that choose to work with the State to implement all or significant portions of the State's Race to the Top plan, as specified in each LEA's agreement with the State. Each participating LEA that receives funding under Title I, Part A will receive a share of the 50 percent of a State's grant award that the State must subgrant to LEAs, based on the LEA's relative share of Title I, Part A allocations in the most recent year at the time of the award, in accordance with section 14006(c) of the ARRA. Any participating LEA that does not receive funding under Title I, Part A (as well as one that does) may receive funding from the State's other 50 percent of the grant award, in accordance with the State's plan.

**The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC):** One of two consortia of States awarded grants under the Race to the Top Assessment program to develop next-generation assessment systems that are aligned to common K-12 English language and mathematics standards and that will accurately measure student progress toward college and career readiness. (For additional information please see <http://www.parcconline.org/>.)

**Persistently lowest-achieving schools:** As determined by the State, (i) any Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that (a) is among the lowest-achieving five percent of Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring or the lowest-achieving five Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring in the State, whichever number of schools is greater; or (b) is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years; and (ii) any secondary school that is eligible for, but does not receive, Title I funds that (a) is among the lowest-achieving five percent of secondary schools or the lowest-achieving five secondary schools in the State that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I funds, whichever number of schools is greater; or (b) is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years. To identify the lowest-achieving schools, a State must take into account both (i) the academic achievement of the "all students" group in a school in terms of proficiency on the State's assessments under section 1111(b)(3) of the ESEA in reading/language arts and mathematics combined; and (ii) the school's lack of progress on those assessments over a number of years in the "all students" group. (For additional information please see <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/index.html>.)



**Qualifying evaluation systems:** Educator evaluation systems that meet the following criteria: rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that: (a) differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth as a significant factor, and (b) are designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement.

**Reform Support Network (RSN):** In partnership with the ISU, the RSN offers collective and individualized technical assistance and resources to grantees of the Race to the Top education reform initiative. The RSN's purpose is to support the Race to the Top grantees as they implement reforms in education policy and practice, learn from each other and build their capacity to sustain these reforms.

The **School Improvement Grants (SIG)** program is authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of the ESEA. Funds are awarded to States to help them turn around persistently lowest-achieving schools. (For additional information please see <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/index.html>.)

**School intervention models:** A State's Race to the Top plan describes how it will support its LEAs in turning around the lowest-achieving schools by implementing one of the four school intervention models:

- **Turnaround model:** Replace the principal and rehire no more than 50 percent of the staff and grant the principal sufficient operational flexibility (including in staffing, calendars/time and budgeting) to fully implement a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student outcomes.
- **Restart model:** Convert a school or close and reopen it under a charter school operator, a charter management organization, or an education management organization that has been selected through a rigorous review process.
- **School closure:** Close a school and enroll the students who attended that school in other schools in the district that are higher achieving.
- **Transformation model:** Implement each of the following strategies: (1) replace the principal and take steps to increase teacher and school leader effectiveness, (2) institute comprehensive instructional reforms, (3) increase learning time and create community-oriented schools, and (4) provide operational flexibility and sustained support.

**Single sign-on:** A user authentication process that permits a user to enter one name and password in order to access multiple applications.

The **SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced):** One of two consortia of States awarded grants under the Race to the Top Assessment program to develop next-generation assessment systems that are aligned to common K-12 English language and mathematics standards and that will accurately measure student progress toward college

and career readiness. (For additional information please see <http://www.k12.wa.us/SMARTER/default.aspx>.)

The **State Scope of Work:** A detailed document for the State project that reflects the grantee's approved Race to the Top application. The State Scope of Work includes items such as the State's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, key personnel, and annual targets for key performance measures. (For additional information please see <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/state-scope-of-work/index.html>.) Additionally, all participating LEAs are required to submit Scope of Work documents, consistent with State requirements, to the State for its review and approval.

**Statewide longitudinal data systems (SLDS):** Data systems that enhance the ability of States to efficiently and accurately manage, analyze, and use education data, including individual student records. The SLDS help States, districts, schools, educators, and other stakeholders to make data-informed decisions to improve student learning and outcomes, as well as to facilitate research to increase student achievement and close achievement gaps. (For additional information please see [http://nces.ed.gov/Programs/SLDS/about\\_SLDS.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/Programs/SLDS/about_SLDS.asp).)

**Student achievement:** For the purposes of this report, student achievement (a) for tested grades and subjects is (1) a student's score on the State's assessments under the ESEA; and, as appropriate, (2) other measures of student learning, such as those described in paragraph (b) of this definition, provided they are rigorous and comparable across classrooms; and (b) for non-tested grades and subjects, alternative measures of student learning and performance such as student scores on pre-tests and end-of-course tests; student performance on English language proficiency assessments; and other measures of student achievement that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.

**Student growth:** The change in student achievement (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements) for an individual student between two or more points in time. A State may also include other measures that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.

**Value-added models (VAMs):** A specific type of growth model based on changes in test scores over time. VAMs are complex statistical models that generally attempt to take into account student or school background characteristics in order to isolate the amount of learning attributable to a specific teacher or school. Teachers or schools that produce more than typical or expected growth are said to "add value."